

III.

A Case of Rupture of the Uterus in the Sixth Month of Pregnancy. By THOMAS ILLOTT, of Bromley, Kent, Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, in London.

ABOUT noon on Sunday, Feb. 16, I was desired to visit Mrs. Hill, but being then absent from home, I did not arrive at Green St. Green, where she lived, till near two o'clock P.M. I found her in bed, vomiting up a considerable quantity ofropy mucus: after each effort to vomit she appeared rather faint; but her pulse was good, and there was no other symptom of disorder.

She supposed that she was in the sixth month of her pregnancy, and had been as well as she usually was when in that state. That about four o'clock in the morning she was awoke by a violent pain, as she said, in her bowels, describing it to have been about the umbilicus. This pain, although violent, yet was of short duration, but was succeeded by vomiting, which had returned at intervals till the time I saw her; but no pain accompanied it.

I left her in about half an hour, with an injunction to the nurse, that if she found any alteration, to let me know, as I thought it probable premature labour might come on. No pain, however, after the first attack, recurred; but she gradually sunk, and died about ten o'clock the same evening.

The manner of her death made me very anxious to examine the body; but as her friends lived at a distance, some days elapsed before their consent could be obtained.

EXAMINATIO CADAVERIS.

The cavity of the abdomen was filled with blood, which had insinuated itself in large quantities among the intestines. On turning back the abdominal muscles, the foetus enveloped in its membranes, which were perfect, with the placenta attached, were found lying in the cavity of the abdomen; there was a rupture of the coats of the uterus, at the fundus, through which the foetus, &c. had escaped. Probably this event took

place early in the morning, at the moment when she felt the pain in the abdomen.

Mrs. Hill was twenty-six years of age, had been pregnant twice before. I attended her in one of her labours; but nothing unusual then occurred.

IV.

Observations on Premature Delivery. By $\Omega\delta\iota\nu\omicron\beta\omicron\eta\theta\omicron\varsigma$. *J. M.*

IN the *Medical Repository*, (Vol. iii. p. 283,) some "*Observations on the Cæsarean Section and premature Delivery*" were inserted, signed $\Omega\delta\iota\nu\omicron\beta\omicron\eta\theta\omicron\varsigma$; one chief object of which was to shew the absolute necessity of having the principles, upon which the practice of inducing premature labour was adopted, clearly defined and understood; because it was probable, that a legal investigation of this practice would, at some time, take place, and practitioners of midwifery might be put into an extremely awkward predicament on such an occasion, by the malice of the designing or the prejudices of the ignorant, unless they could very satisfactorily explain their motives and conduct.

I am afraid that I went a *round-about* way to prove my position, otherwise I cannot account for the *severe*, and as I presume, *undeserved* strictures on my paper, in a subsequent number, by a SURGEON, who evidently mistook the drift of my arguments.

This gentleman is highly indignant that I should have made the slightest allusion to the *lex scripta* upon this subject, or should even have hinted, that any thing like *criminality* could attach to any member of the honorable profession, to which we both belong, and in which he believes that neither *knaves* nor *fools* exist. I envy him that happy condition of mind which can lead to such a belief, and will not attempt to shake his credulity; the intention of the present paper is solely to state, that what I ventured to prognosticate has really occurred, a case of this nature having been investigated before a Coroner on the 30th of October last*.

The physician who had attended the case, gave a most satisfactory account of his conduct, and his character remained unimpeached; the verdict of the Jury freeing him from all imputation of blame.

What would have been the event had the necessity of the operation *not* been proved? What, if the operator had been either *knave* or *fool* enough to undertake an operation, the principles and justification of which he did not understand?

* See the *British Press*, Newspaper, October 31.